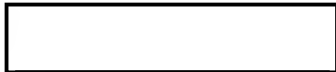
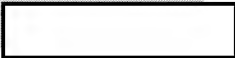


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Moscow Urges the African National Congress To Focus on Political Struggle (U)

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The Soviets continue to promote the African National Congress (ANC) as the main player in the struggle against the current apartheid regime in South Africa, but they appear to have shifted their tactics on how to conduct this struggle. They apparently calculate that a violent overthrow of the regime is unlikely in the near future and that the ANC must complement its military actions with greater emphasis on political tactics with a view to securing a negotiated solution. Moscow evidently believes that the ANC should adopt positions that have a broader appeal and should increase its diplomatic efforts to bring domestic and international pressure on Pretoria to move toward negotiation with the ANC. However, Moscow still believes that the ANC should continue its military pressure against the government. [REDACTED]

Moscow's "Old Thinking"...

Moscow's position since at least the early 1960s had been that the best way to advance Soviet interests in South Africa was to support the ANC's campaign of armed struggle and to advocate the violent overthrow of the South African Government and its replacement by an ANC-dominated, pro-Soviet regime. Various reporting indicates that the Soviets apparently believed that widespread violence would provoke counteraction and mass repression by the South African Government, which in turn would contribute to the polarization and politicization of the masses. They also believed that violence would disrupt the economy, lead to disinvestment by Western companies, and ultimately promote the collapse of the South African regime. One of Moscow's major concerns was that gradual reform and peaceful elimination of apartheid would reduce the likelihood that the ANC—and the South African Communist Party—would seize power. [REDACTED]

...Some "New Thinking"

In general, Soviet "new thinking" on the Third World under Gorbachev has stressed the need to use political means to resolve conflicts whenever possible. According to various press and diplomatic reporting, Moscow has tried to convince its clients of the desirability of

negotiated solutions. It also has emphasized the need to start and sustain regional negotiations even if the positions of key actors are far apart. The Soviets believe that this policy will help them eliminate regional conflicts as an issue with the United States, reduce the burden of supporting clients in light of their greater concern for their domestic economic problems, and promote a less threatening image internationally. [REDACTED]

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In line with this approach, the Soviets seem to have reevaluated their view of how change can come about in South Africa. They apparently now conclude that a violent overthrow of the current regime is unlikely and that the ANC must put greater emphasis on political tactics—though not abandoning its military actions—with a view to securing a negotiated solution. They now seem less concerned that a peaceful elimination of apartheid could proscribe Soviet influence in a postapartheid South Africa. Last year General Secretary Gorbachev publicly supported the idea of eliminating apartheid by political settlement. However, the Soviets stipulate that any negotiations between the ANC and South African Government must be acknowledged openly and, thus far, have continued to support the ANC's conditions for opening formal negotiations. These conditions include releasing all political prisoners, lifting the state of emergency, withdrawing troops and police from black townships, and ending the ban on the ANC. We do not know if the Soviets believe that there is any chance of the South African Government accepting such conditions but suspect that, if the regime indicated a willingness to meet some of the conditions, the Soviets might encourage the ANC to be more flexible. [REDACTED]

The Soviets apparently believe that meaningful change in South Africa will not occur in the short term. Although they have publicly stated that a regional settlement on Angola and Namibia will improve prospects for the elimination of apartheid in

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The South African Communist Party

The South African Communist Party (SACP)—founded in 1921, outlawed in the early 1950s, and headquartered in London—is of all Third World Communist parties among the most loyal to the USSR and takes its cues on policy from Moscow. Although the majority of members are black, the party is dominated by English-speaking whites and Asians. The SACP has a considerable degree of influence in the African National Congress (ANC) that stems from SACP representation on the ANC's ruling National Executive Committee as well as the ANC's dependence on the Soviet Bloc. Ties were formalized in an alliance in 1969 of the three revolutionary "pillars of the liberation struggle": the ANC, the SACP, and the SACP-controlled South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). Recognizing that a socialist revolution is not at hand in South Africa and that the SACP is a weak Communist party with a limited following inside South Africa, the Soviets advise the SACP to work within the ANC, in cooperation with non-Communist elements, to change the governing system. The ANC is not directed by the Soviet Union, however, and non-Communist nationalists remain in the ascendancy.

South Africa, several accounts indicate that Soviet Foreign Ministry and academic specialists on Africa estimate that ending apartheid could take 10 years or more.

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The new Soviet stance also appears to reflect a change in the Soviet view of the utility of disrupting the South African economy. While the Soviets probably would benefit from a disruption of South African

production of gold and strategic minerals, they almost certainly do not want to support another African "basket case" that would look to the USSR for long-term economic assistance. In contacts with US academics and officials during 1988, Soviet academics have suggested that peaceful change, which would preserve South Africa's economic base, rather than revolutionary upheaval, is in the interest of all sides concerned. Moscow has also cautioned the ANC that a postapartheid South Africa should not experiment with extreme versions of a socialist economy as have other African countries. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Soviets urged the ANC not to put too much emphasis on nationalization, which they said historically had proved "extremely damaging" in Africa when pursued "excessively." They advised that only "vital economic institutions such as the mines and banks" be nationalized. [REDACTED]

The Soviets also support a broadening of ANC contacts with other black South African opposition groups and white South Africans. Soviet media commented favorably, for example, on a meeting of ANC members with moderate Afrikaaner businessmen, white Liberal members of Parliament, and writers from South Africa in Senegal in July 1987, which they called a step toward improving the ANC's international image and increasing international support for the ANC. According to the US Embassy in Lesotho, Soviet Foreign Ministry Africa specialist Boris Asoyan noted that, while the ANC is an important political force in South Africa and is the only organization that represents "all of South Africa," it is not the only organization commanding the allegiance of South African blacks. The Soviets have argued, for instance, that the leader of the Zulu organization Inkatha, Chief Buthelezi—who they believe is supported by a majority of the country's 6 million Zulus—cannot be ignored politically. [REDACTED]

A Constitution After Apartheid

While the Soviets do not expect a political settlement in South Africa in the next five to 10 years, they reportedly have disagreed with the ANC over the

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ANC's publicly stated goals for the political structure of a postapartheid South Africa. They have suggested that the ANC adopt a constitution that would allow for a "federal structure" similar to that of the Soviet Union. [redacted]

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(S) [redacted] the Soviets proposed the establishment of minority "republics" to give ethnic minorities—including whites, Coloreds, and Indians—in South Africa separate constitutional identities [redacted]

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The Soviets have specifically urged the ANC to adopt a position on majority rule that would have a greater chance of being acceptable to whites. Senior officials of the SACP—who also sit on the ANC's National Executive Committee—discussed the issue with Soviet officials early this year [redacted]

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(S) [redacted] the "predominant Soviet view" is that Afrikaaners' rights must be protected in a new constitution in order to achieve a political settlement in South Africa. When presented with the Soviet view, the ANC stated that black South Africans opposed the idea of ensuring minority group rights. The ANC constitution committee has outlined a set of constitutional guidelines with no guarantees for minorities except in the cultural and linguistic sphere. [redacted]

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Continued Military Pressure Not Ignored

Despite urging the ANC to make greater efforts to put diplomatic pressure on Pretoria, Moscow has not abandoned the tactic of using military pressure on the South African Government to bring about change in South Africa. Former President Gromyko publicly claimed in February 1988 that "the struggle for South Africa's freedom in all its different forms—from diplomatic efforts to armed struggle—enjoys growing sympathy and support from the broad international public." Africa specialist Asoyan stated at a conference in Maseru that the USSR accepted "step-by-step movement" toward an end to apartheid but noted it is necessary to maintain pressure—including that of armed conflict—on President Botha [redacted]

[redacted] He noted that the USSR had been the first to provide arms to the ANC and stands behind that commitment [redacted]

Outlook

Despite its shift in approach, Moscow will remain firmly committed to the elimination of the apartheid regime in South Africa and almost certainly will continue to support and promote the ANC's bid to come to power as the leading representative of South African blacks. At the same time, the Soviets will increase their own efforts to monitor developments in South Africa. They have been frustrated by their lack of direct information on South Africa's internal situation and recognize that the information they receive from the ANC has its own biases, [redacted]

[redacted] The Soviets almost certainly will try to broaden their contacts with the South African Government, which have included occasional talks

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with South African diplomats in third countries and at the UN. Initially, they are likely to conduct limited private contacts with South African officials, but, as the situation evolves in southern Africa, however, they almost certainly will consider holding open discussions with Pretoria. [redacted]

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Soviet policy toward the ANC will be affected by Moscow's own interactions with and perceptions of South Africa. Moscow continues to distrust South Africa's stated intention resulting from US-mediated negotiations among Angola, Cuba, and South Africa to implement UN Resolution 435 on Namibian independence. If Namibian independence is achieved, the Soviets may conclude that the South African Government can negotiate in good faith and may urge the ANC to propose negotiating initiatives to step up the pressure on Pretoria to resolve the internal political situation in South Africa. If, however, Pretoria stalls or reneges on the implementation of Resolution 435 or if South Africa cracks down on internal opposition to show it is still tough on the issue of white security, the Soviets may calculate that it is fruitless to negotiate with Pretoria and that an intensification of ANC attacks on the South African regime is the only remaining path to follow. [redacted]

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